DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 102 810 FL 005 132

AUTHOR Seng, Mark W.
TITLE The Role of Media in Foreign Language Teaching.
PUB DATE 12 Oct 73
NOTE 19p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Dialogue; Educational Equipment; Illustrations; *Instructional Materials; *Instructional Media; *Language Instruction; Overhead Projectors; Photography; Projection Equipment; *Slides; Student Developed Materials; Teacher Developed Materials; Transparencies; *Visual Aids

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses three types of visual media and how they can be used to enhance foreign language teaching. The first method, nonphotographic slides, is described in terms of its assets, limitations, and possible uses. The second method discussed is the use of color slides with close-up photography. Three examples are given of slide series. The third method discussed is the overhead projector. Various sets of visuals are described, including suggestions for teaching time and for explaining laboratory procedures, and a detailed unit on the Aztec calendar. (AM)

ED102810

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Role of Media in Foreign Language Teaching

Mark W. Seng

Foreign Language Education Center

October 12, 1973

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

FL 005 132

Language teachers encounter unusual, often unique media needs in their classrooms. On occasion they may use media in much the same way as their colleagues. 16mm color films about other countries provide one example. However, very frequently media can be used in unlikely but highly useful ways in teaching students audiolingual skills. Three different types of visual media will be discussed with specific ways that media can be used to enhance foreign language teaching. An attempt will be made to describe classroom activities that are appropriate when considered in the light of current language teaching methodologies. These three techniques are ones that have been most favorably received in the author's graduate class at the University of Texas concerning the use of media in foreign language teaching. The three methods are: non-photographic slides, color slides made with close up photography, and the use of the overhead projector in language teaching.

NONPHOTOGRAPHIC SLIDES

Often, the foreign language teacher wants to project a picture for his students. Nonphotographic slides offer the most inexpensive, easiest way. Essentially the technique is to make a transparency as if for the overhead. This large transparency has twenty or more small pictures which are then cut out. Each of the twenty small images is inserted in a two by two slide mount. The projected slide is comparable in brilliance and sharpness to the overhead with the bonus

of convenient, compact storage. Another plus is the rapid, automatic changing of slides, all of which can be done in the lighted classroom. The suprisingly excellent results are yielded by the superb optics of the slide projector. Any overhead transparency machine will yield fine results including both 3M processes, Agfa, Xerox, Color lift, even the typewriter.

*Slide typewritten on mimeo stencil SCOLT '73

The only limitations of this technique are that the printed original picture must be the same size as the finished slide transparency. In other words, it must be an illustration which fits within the 2 by 2 slide mount. This method also works best if sharp line drawing is used. The language teacher can use nonphotographic slides in at least seven different ways: 1) a topic for discussion by a student, 2) an illustration of a dialog, 3) an explanation of the mechanics of articulation, 4) as pictures of lexical items, 5) a description of specific concepts, 6) as cultural illustrations, 7) even as slides to complement photographic color slides.

Topics for Discussion

As Rivers (1968) pointed out, students learning to express themselves in a foreign language need to have something to talk about. The point she was making is that teachers are concerned with the student attending to the task of how to express himself rather than wasting time thinking of what to say. It parallels that problem of being given a microphone and told to say "something." Nonphotographic slides solve this problem beautifully.

* series of slides depicting scenes of people doing things such as clerk in store showing merchandise, woman using telephone, family playing in backyard, man about to eat turkey, man in rain with umbrella, mother scolding daughter watching television.

These illustrations focus the students' attention and alert their limited foreign language vocabulary. Give the class a few minutes to think about the illustration, and then select one student to describe the scene in a few sentences. The activity is lively, the students comments though predictable will still pique one's curiosity. Different pictures demand different levels of skill and different lexical items. The slide of the man about to eat the turkey is rather straightforward in contrast to the visual with four pictures which calls for a narrative sequence. One could show a scene like this and ask the student to pick a partner and to develop a dialog for the following Monday. The subsequent class will prove very interesting with each student eager to participate and to hear what story his peers have developed.

*Slide of woman on telephone

The language teacher can project a topic for general discussion such as the woman using the telephone. From the smile on her face what might she be saying? Students can seek out pictures on their own. They can even make their own slides using the simple color lift methods. Or one can project the picture of a noun, a verb and

*Color lift slide of watch, swimmers, boaters

a place and have the students create a sentence. For more gifted students use rather abstract slides, which allow them to use their

imaginations. Show students how to make their own slides. Here are some assignments you can give your students that will allow a wide range of interests and abilities.

1. Have students prepare a series of slides with a narrative about a favorite activity.
2. After students have read a story, each student is to make one slide illustrating a certain part. Then, show the slides in sequence.
3. Have students look for illustrations in magazines and newspapers for which the class could prepare sentences.
4. Have the students draw a series of stick figures illustrating a weekend or a day in Mexico city (or Paris) (or Berlin)?
5. Ask more gifted or creative students to suggest a drawing to represent an abstract idea. The class could then try to guess the foreign language representation.

Dialog

A somewhat different use for these slides is to clarify the meaning of a new audio lingual dialog.

A universal favorite among language teachers is "Peanuts." Many teachers have successfully found a number of cartoon pictures to illustrate basic dialogs. These pictures serve as cues when the dialog is introduced the first time. They serve two purposes. The meaning of the dialog is more readily apparent. Second, students universally

enjoy Peanuts. Where special emphasis is needed, use a felt marker or cellophane to color the picture. Different marking pens differ greatly in their effectiveness. An effective test is to try them out on the old fashioned type of scotch tape. The most difficult part of this task is finding the right pictures. More advanced students can prove most helpful in finding the right pictures.

* a series of slides of Peanuts and his friends illustrating a dialog from a current textbook.
Slides of Peanuts with dialog.

Students are guaranteed to respond with enthusiasm to slides like these. They offer non verbal explanation of the dialog with no interference problems. They convey the basic thought of the dialog which is presented in English for the first time. Then, the pictures would not be used for a while until the class developed adequate articulation skills. There are many types of assignments in which students develop their own dialogs and/or pictures. Here are some ideas:

1. Have students prepare slides of objects or ideas which represent sentences learned in dialogs.
2. Ask students to select a category such as fruit, food, buildings, animals, clothes, vehicles, and then to draw or collect pictures about them. With another student they could create a dialog based on the picture.
3. Select certain students to illustrate just one line or a sentence of a dialog they have learned.
4. Have students prepare a slide or slides and a dialog of how they might accept or reject a date.

Articulation

Language teachers spend considerable time explaining how certain sounds in the target language are formed. These slides work well here.

Stevick's Workbook in Language Teaching (1963), offers not only a clear concise explanation of the production of various phonemes but has some fine drawings as well. Although these drawings are too large, it is possible to solve the size problem in two ways. First, one can use only the critical portion of the mouth for projection. Second, one can use one of the newer Xerox machines to reduce the size of the illustrations so the entire picture will fit. The cost is very moderate. One can even reduce them on to plastic immediately for mounting directly in slides.

* series of slides showing the position of the tongue for the production of various phonemes.

Lexical Items

Coloring these slides can be done in several ways. Marking pens offer the simplest way but sometimes cutting a square of cellophane provides just the right touch. The telephone book will yield hundreds of pictures of every sort of thing people use in their daily lives. The illustrations are just the right size.

* series of slides of various objects from the yellow pages.

Slides like these work well for vocabulary review. It is interesting to obtain drawings from the yellow pages of foreign telephone directories because you will of course find some interesting differences.

* Slide showing parts of a car

Here is an illustration taken from a toy in a cereal box. You can see that the illustration is sharp and accurate. The exploded drawing showing assembly of the toy car provides a perfect way to identify parts of the car. Specific concepts that have proved trouble-makers in the past, benefit from a few minutes spent in preparing slides.

One interesting technique is to use visuals to test lexical items. Slides work well to review vocabulary items quickly periodically during the year. Students can use them on an individual basis as well.

Specific Concepts

Teaching time with nonphotographic slides provides an exciting, fast paced lesson. One can move through thirty or forty slides in a few minutes. It is wise to sequence the slides so that the more difficult or tricky times are postponed. One can visualize concepts like alto and largo vs. grande with a spot of color for added emphasis.

* Slides of time

Or, present a slide for general discussion such as a slide showing foods on the table.

As previously mentioned, concepts which have proved tricky benefit from the nonphotographic slide treatment. Largo vs. grande offers one example with ser and estar another possibility. The preterit and imperfect can be illustrated so that the students can see the two

together for the sake of contrast. A pocket size calendar will provide

* Slide of month

the basic transparency which can be converted into a series in which each day desired is marked in red.

Cultural Illustrations

Certain cultural concepts lend themselves to the line drawings and thus will make excellent slides. The Aztec gods can be discussed but the slides can serve an additional purpose. Project the slide on a piece of cardboard several feet across. Follow the lines with a marking pen and you can quickly obtain an impressive piece of art which can even be colored. Maps often are printed the correct size

* Slide of map, road signs

to serve as the basis for a discussion of trips of heroes of the past or cultural points of interest today. Road signs interest students because they are interested in visiting these countries.

Suprisingly, the quality of these nonphotographic slides often proves so good that they are able to meet the competition of color slides made with a camera.

* Sample slides with titles -- one of the calendar stone.

With a typewriter set at "stencil," one can quickly make title slides that prove very attractive indeed. The mimeograph stencil on which the slide is made will project a brilliant blue or greer. In one situation a close up slide was needed of a calendar stone. A non-photographic slide worked very well to fill this need. Typewritten slides work well for tests.

COLOR SLIDES WITH CLOSE UP PHOTOGRAPHY

Many language teachers have yet to discover the wonderful world of close up photography. A few years ago, I developed a simple method of taking close up slides. Since that time hundreds of teachers, much to their amazement, have found that even without photographic experience, they could take excellent slides of magazine pictures and postcards. One usually cannot distinguish between slides taken in the foreign country, on site, from those slides taken from color magazine pictures. (The photographic method is described in another paper, available after this talk.) Here are three different sets of slides, the first two meet primarily cultural objectives with the third set of slides designed and used in an exhibit.

It would seem appropriate to tape a narrative in English for beginning students, and to tape perhaps two more talks also synchronized with the slides in the target language with one more advanced than the other. The slides could then be used in the lab. Of course, the three narratives could be available to students in the lab as different programs.

* Series of slides about an archaelogical trip to Central America

Interestingly enough the first slide of the jungle appeared in the National Geographic article in black and white. The jungle is described in the article as a monochrome green. Because it would not make a good first slide to introduce a set of color slides, a piece

of green cellophane was placed in front of it to color it green. The close up slide of the calendar stone is also a nonphotographic slide which yields an excellent quality detail view of the stone in a very simple way. One of the later pictures showed two women in very old fashioned dresses -- something that would cause high school students to laugh. Therefore, the women in the slide were masked out with black plastic tape. The slide of the man drawing the barbed string through his tongue was followed with a close up slide since this type of humor appeals to perhaps otherwise disinterested boys.

* Series of slides about Austria

This series of slides was made several years ago by a young woman doing her practice teaching. She will probably keep this set of slides for many years. Her enthusiasm for the topic and the good quality of the slides will ensure a fine reception in her German classes. Slides like this also work out well for language club meetings or parent teacher nights.

* Set of slides about the Aztec calendar

One of the joys of being a teacher is that on occasion one is asked to develop an exhibit of one kind or another, usually without much financial support. This set of slides was developed for a Showcase exhibit and ran without supervision for six days, all day long. A repeating tape cartridge was used with a Carousel slide projector. Everyone knows that a Carousel tray holds 80 slides. Therefore, a series of twenty slides was developed with three additional copies.

The tape was to cycle and start each of the four sets of twenty slides. Panic fell when it was discovered that the tray actually holds 81 slides since one is kept in the machine plus the 80 in the tray. Therefore, at the last minute, a series of slides had to be developed based on a number of 81. The original 20 slide set was expanded to 27, the smallest number divisible into 81 if one starts with 20. Nonphotographic slides saved the day and successfully expanded the s[illegible]es.

To provide a backdrop, a slide of the Aztec Calendar was projected on to a five foot piece of white plastic. A student spent some two weeks drawing the calendar with a felt marking pen. A letter had been sent to Bulova asking them for the loan of an Accutron watch with the thought of drawing a comparison between an ancient way of telling time and a space age one. Bulova sent the miniature electronic timer that was scheduled to be sent to the moon and to be buried there to trigger experiments for the next year or two. This beautiful tiny movement drew a lot of attention and interest.

THE OVERHEAD PROJECTOR IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Different media seem to prove appropriate in different teaching situations. I find that the slide projector is more convenient at the college level since one must often carry it some distance and use it in different classrooms. Many high school teachers stay in the same room and find the overhead a convenient way to project illustrations in the lighted classroom.

* Series of visuals about time

The overhead offers the language teacher the ideal way to teach time. Start using only the hour hand and move it to the easier times, son las dos, son las ocho, etc. Once the class has demonstrated that it knows this step, move to the singular (in Spanish) because that is a bit trickier. Now take the difficult time from 12:30 to 1:30. A red semicircle on the left will have alerted the class that there must be something special about that portion of the clock. Finally, finish with cuarto and media. The point is that the teacher has carefully thought out the concepts involved. Only a few minutes of lively practice are involved, probably over a period of a week or so.

* Visual of test distribution.

Don't overlook the possibility of using a visual to show the students how the entire class did on tests, and their position.

* Visual of bread

A color lift is an inexpensive way to project pictures of food. One can use the overhead for visual pattern practice as well. Use

oral cues and visual, pointing cues to have students practice different patterns. The notion of using this approach was first suggested for use with the map, but the overhead is much more convenient. Use word cues, phrase cues, even statement cues that require the subjunctive, and question cues as well.

* Set of visuals about the lab

Here is a set of visuals a teacher created to explain the operation and procedures of the language lab. Anyone who has had to explain such things to a class and then had to repeat the same explanation again and again to other classes all in one day will appreciate this excellent idea.

* Visual showing couple checking into an hotel

Of course one can use visuals on the overhead as topics for discussion as well. These techniques offer variety to the class and spark student interest.

* 4 square square visual

You can distribute copies of a visual with a piece of plastic which the student places over the picture. He can then write a conversation above the cartoon figures. Then, place the dialog beneath the master transparency and open each of the four squares in sequence. In this way, you control what the class is seeing and direct their attention.

* Visual of parts of house, food on table, door that opens, song, month

Some years ago a student developed a very nice unit on the Aztec calendar. The overhead offers an ideal way to discuss complicated concepts because with overlays one can start with a simple fundamental and increase the complexity bit by bit.

The Aztec Calendar survives as a[1] symbol of a civilization whose language[2] and culture have been lost but whose concept of time still lives.[3]

This monument is one of the most famous archaeological pieces in the world, one of the finest expressions of Aztec art, and of their knowledge of Astronomy and Mathematics. The Aztec Calendar represents a tremendous amount of patient work. It took 52 years to be completed, using, according to the majority of opinions, only stone tools. The Calendar was started in the year 1427 and completed in the year 1479.[4] Placed on the top of the main temple of the Aztecs, the temple was on the very site where Mexico City's Cathedral stands today. The Calendar was originally in a vertical position, facing South and was painted in several brilliant colors: [5]Red, blue, yellow, white, and other colors. The Spaniards conquered the Aztec city of "TENOCHTITLAN" in the year 1521. After destroying the main temple, they buried the stone. It was not until December of 1790 that it was recovered.[6]

At the center of the stone and inside a circle is the face of the Sun God of the Aztecs.[7]

Surrounding the face of the Sun God are four squares. These probably represent the four seasons of the year; and also the four different ways, by which, according to the Aztec legend, the world had come to an end; first, by wild animals, then by wind, the[8] third time by fire, and the last by floods.[9]

Here one can see the Sun God's claws clutching human, sacrificial hearts.[10]

The next circle shows 20 squares, inside of each the name of the 20 different days of the Aztec month:[11]

1.	crocodile	5.	lizard	9.	monkey	13.	jaguar	17.	house
2.	wind	6.	snake	10.	herb	14.	eagle	18.	reed
3.	death	7.	water	11.	vulture	15.	rain	19.	rabbit
4.	deer[12]	8.	dog[13]	12.	motion[14]	16.	flower[15]	20.	flint knife[16]

Dividing the monolith into 8 parts, there are 8 angles; these are the sun rays placed according to the cardinal points. The Aztecs had a perfect conception of orientation and built their cities according to the compass.[17]

Beyond this and encircling the monument, there are two, enormous, fantastic snakes. The bodies of the snakes, divided in sections, show the symbol of the flame. It seems that these sections are also records of 52 year cycles.[18]

These snakes face each other at the lower part of the stone and have trunks like an elephant, but front legs like a jaguar. In the upper part of the stone between the tails of the fire snakes, there is a square inside of which we can read the date 13 "Acatl," corresponding to the year 1479, the date on which it is believed the Calendar Stone was completed.[19]

On the very edge one may notice 8 equidistant holes, into which were placed horizontal sticks, that projected their shadows on the figures of the Calendar. Thus, this stone was also used as a sun dial.

The monument weighs 57,000 pounds and is 12 feet in diameter.[20]

This modern electronic timepiece--100 times smaller than the Aztec Calendar[21]--dramatically illustrates a path of progress since ancient civilizations. In contrast, we are just[22] beginning to understand the nature of language, that interface of understanding among men.[23] Hopefully that understanding will grow as time continues to pass.[24 25 26 27]

Colored picture and general reference

The Aztec Calendar, Francisco Gonzalez Davila. Mexico City, January, 1955. (No printer or publisher given although Mr. Davila apparently worked for the national Museum in Mexico City at the time the booklet was written.

Bibliography

Rivers, Wilma M. Teaching Foreign Language Skills. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Stevick, Earl W. A Workbook in Language Teaching. New York: Abingdon Press, 1963.